

To the ORVAC Committee
August 28,2013

I am not to sure what is being pushed for ORV specs heard a lot of 4x4 only for new vehicles. This runs in contradiction to Traditional uses and values of our Culture Many old buggies were built 2 wheel drive and do very well especially now that we have designated trails. The Recent GMP and ROD on ORVs have eliminated several generations and future generations from being able to practice old fashioned ability to build things with access to limited materials. As kids we built a buggy using the drive train from an old Cushman mail cart it was cheep used little fuel and would run all over the place during the dry season but were severely limited during the wet but it was something that could be built by a few elementary school age kids with some help form the older guys. This is a lost art now due to the oppressive ban of unlicensed operators as well as minors not being allowed to camp and visit the Cypress on their own as I had done since elementary school.

The campgrounds today are void of youngsters camping on their own. Even the older kids now get harassed at camps. To Law Enforcement they are considered a nuisance these kids are interrogated searched and what should be considered a good life experience for the kids is now a soured experience. The powers that be just can't have some free fun loving scruffy looking kids enjoying the Preserve as we all did. NO they must be supervised and now fees are being added to the last free camping areas. on top the fuel ,food or motorized vehicle they build to ride out there. So again the NPS dictates and manages the area favoring the yuppie//academia/touristy/wealthier elite homogenized types that better suit vision of who and how a person is to enjoy the Preserve.

I know that if the same group of us that used to ride our bike from Miami to Loop road would be kicked out there if we wanted to camp or on occasion we would get a few of the older teenagers who had a drivers license and we would camp at Monument. Those days of freedom and what you felt are gone. The real life experiences that help develop the ability to engineer repairs equipment, basic first aid how not to panic we learned to handle a lot at a very young age. Today's adults and what I consider kids now want a special paved bikeway along the Tamiami trail.

Everything good has incrementally been stolen form the people I see it all the time when working in schools the dumping down of our kids, the lack of common sense the instant gratification needs of many visitors to the Cypress and other places

Well now that I spewed off a few observations and some antidotal information I am unable to attend this ORVAC Committee meeting. From the above paragraph I would like to reiterate that a 2 wheel drive vehicle should continue to be allowed to be built and stickered . I would like bring up issues that I have I brought up since the implantation of this ORV Plan that have been pushed back since the ORV Plan was put into place

Please place the following as a request for Agenda Items

Unlicensed Operators

The unlicensed operator rule needs to be addressed. Florida Law Allows it.

The NPS has a lot of information I had sent in years earlier as well as ways to set up various youth safety courses that even some adults should look at. The BICY should have copies of a multiple pile various booklets from courses and at one time I had even laid out a course using specs from one of the larger safety instate if the NPS choose to a youngster could prove their skills via this course and I would recommend that an oral/written part also goes along with it.

This unjust ban has driven out whole families, kept disabled kids from participating. This rule has also led to the lost of a rite of passage that comes with being a Gladesman. The loss of knowledge, skills creativity and the appreciation of our unique environment for several generations.

Folks with Disabilities

I have asked many times what can be done for this.

A few times at the meetings the committee agreed to look into this and even had some good ideas of where you could drive to and let disabled person visit either stay with the buggy or set him or her up in a stand and come back to pick them up later.

My son has been disabled for years and was okay with it when he could still run a small buggy or his airboat. He no longer has the ability to climb up the cage to run his boat and the day that happened he has never been back in the backcountry. I would build him a boat with a seat low enough for him to get in to the boat and on the seat with crutches but with virtually no access or egress it is an expense not in my reach.

I would also like to build a handicap accessible buggy with a wheelchair type lift but again without some type of accommodations for handicapped folks to get off the designated trail far enough to hunt without being bothered.

The way it is now if a disabled person wished to hunt he would not be able to get far enough off the trail to park in a good hunting spot or get dropped off at he is limited by the existing plan unable to escape regular ORV traffic and worst yet the amount of noise that comes from the commercial tour operations

If he had been able to get dropped off or drive himself deeper into the head or around the back side he would have had a better chance of not getting his spot ruined for the day. Again the NPS shows favored status to the preferred type of visitor over the Traditional visitor. The NPS provided handicapped restrooms and boardwalks for their choice of visitors but no consideration for the Gladesman that's been injured, diseased, or fallen to some type of calamity where motorized access is the only way to get to where you were once a free man.

So in my immediate family my son has been locked out due to disabilities my younger son during his most formative years was banned from riding which took away the desire to build, repair and maintain our ORVs he did learn the basics but once the kids were banned we confined ourselves just to walking as far as we could

Now I am injured and its been its been 8 months of not walking at all finally got surgery
I will be able to walk again not sure for how long of a distance will not be able to carry
the gear or drag a deer back from the woods

My wife a cancer survivor can only walk short distances

So now 3 out of the 4 of us will no longer visit our favorite places

The ORV plan has run this family out of the woods

Curfews need to done away with

I also ask that this 10 pm curfew be revisited even if I do not fully recover I would like to
see frogging continue for all as part of our heritage. Frogs don't wear watches'

sometimes they come up early may times not until the wee hours of morning

Sometimes I go lucky early but most nights we were out just before daylight

I had planned to ask these things in person today but am still unable to travel and would
like to make sure that all of ORVAC gets this message

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